

To a
Prairie
Rose *and*
Other Poems

By
MARY MATHESON

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TO A PRAIRIE ROSE *and Other Poems*

By
MARY MATHESON



TO A PRAIRIE ROSE

IT thrills my spirit when I see
The leafing of the lilac tree;
The unfolding of the lowly green
So near the ground where, still unseen,
The lovely rose, with fast-closed eyes
Awaits the prairie's glad surprise.

And now you wake, fairer than they
That came before or those that may
In Autumn gleam upon the plain;
O, let all those who measure gain
By season's crops, when earth grows sere
Recall the Beauty of the Year!



THE PRAIRIES RE-VISITED

I SAW new grandeur on the mystic plain—
A farther vision, spelling larger thought—
A radiance that could not call in vain
To hearts for which such loveliness was wrought.

A voice as music fell upon my ear,
Sometimes in laughter, sometimes soft and low,
Sometimes in wistful callings, sweet and clear,
Or tender tones—none save thy children know.

So would I sing thy praises for thou art
Dearer than ever, though far lands I view,
Sweetest of garnered memories in the heart—
Forever old, yet strangely, ever new!

THE FRIENDLY SONG

YOU sang to me a Friendly Song
Across the mist of years;
Did Laughter to the theme belong?
Or heartfelt, sudden tears?

Or was it Truth that stood and knocked
At some stern, fast-closed door—
Or Love with hands close-interlocked
Still seeking gifts the more?

Or Joy, that lived beyond a doubt
To shed upon the bloom
Of blighted, pilgrim souls without
A light amid the gloom?

Or Faith, that with unerring eye
Has garnered in her pile
Of treasures loved so tenderly—
Yet somehow—lost awhile?

I know you not—yet when you sang
The Friendly Song to me
Far out across the years there rang
Life's common Melody!



GIFTS

HE lives in realms I know not, mingling with
The great of earth till some sweet cloistered calm
Envelopes him, or some soul-stirring psalm
Inspires, or ancient lore or myth,
And his high thoughts find outlet with great ease
In many phrases couched in words that please
Till he is loved by people, praised, admired,
Because his art is all could be desired.

But I find duty in the common task,
The lowly offices of Motherhood,
The daily ministering to my brood
Of helpless and dependent ones, I ask
No greater gift, though his may not be mine,
Nor mine be his—each is not less divine.

CANADIAN SEPTEMBER

THIS month shall clothe you with rare gold,
And touch with peace your tired hands,
Till every loveliness unfold
That Beauty's ancient law demands.

And though I may not witness now
The glory of the fruitful year
Nor catch the light upon your brow
When ripened harvests shall appear.

I know, dear land, fulfilment lies
About you as an halo would
The lovely matron whose sweet eyes
First speak the joys of Motherhood.



FRIENDSHIP

THE kind of Friendship I would give,
And I, of others, claim,
Would never let the tongue defile,
Or mar another's name.

That falls like oil on troubled seas
Nor fails to understand
Another's weakness, and withholds
The hasty reprimand.

That finds the good in all it sees,
And speaks of this alone;
Yet still will tell to me my faults
Nor evil will condone.

That helps another when it sees
Him burdened on the road,
And though it may not bear the cross,
Will share the heavy load.

Such friendship is akin to love,
Its ways the Master trod;
It is a flower plucked from out
The garden plot of God.

WHERE JOY ABOUNDS

HE is not all alone whose quest is reaching
Out into vast and unknown seas afar;
Nor he, alone, whose silent heart beseeching
Finds solace in one vague and distant star.

Out in the silence of the mountain passes
Or in my vast and kindly prairie-land
Some wind that blows across the scented grasses
Will bring the message he can understand.

But in the towns where crowds are homeward faring,
And gilded spires point upward to the sky,
O, here is loneliness beyond comparing,
And Solitude in midnight garb goes by.

So shall I think of seas where ships are sailing,
And forests brave with hearts unwearied, strong,
For some great love with kindness unfailing
Lights up these pathways as we pass along.



ON THE WRITING OF BOOKS

WOULD I like to write a book?
'Tis a task that's long and dreary,
And the time that it must take
Must make authors weak and weary.

Would I like to write a book?
Missing all the fields of clover
On the meadows and the hills
That I love to wander over?

And the days beside the sea,
Watching as the gulls go by,
Where the crimson clouds are sailing
Like fair ships along the sky?

Would I like to write a book?
Filled with an imagined Cupid,
When I might be making love?
Writing books is surely stupid!

THE HOLIDAY TENT

CANVAS the tent in which we lived—
Nor lovely to the sight;
Each morn we folded it away—
We reared it up at night,
A homey place it made for us
Along Life's travelled way;
Good times then known, have long since flown—
We wish them back today.

So swiftly years go by, alas!
The little hands that then
Pulled back the curtains playfully,
Belong to stalwart men.
The little girls are women now
Who once, with charming ways,
Laughed back to us so merrily
Throughout those vocal days.
And though the years have sped away,
Still memories are dear,
And the bright joys of tenting days
Have gladdened every year.
A sweet, gay music comes from far—
I catch my breath to hear
And, though the tent is vacant quite,
I hear it loud and clear.

And so I dream of other days
While simple tasks demand
My half-attention, for that lure
I can not well withstand.
Some corner of Life's garden yet
Will give me dreams of thee,
O, Tent, that in long summer days
Sheltered my loves and me.

And not alone will dreams suffice
To satisfy my heart;
Out in the world these ones I pray
Will live a noble part
And in some corner, overgrown
With weeds of Doubt and Sin,
Will add some touch of Love and let
A bit of Heaven in.

MY DAYS ARE LIVED

MY days are lived among the things
That count for nothing much
But washing dishes, baking bread,
And stewing prunes and such;
And sometimes when the day is done
I fold my tired hands
And wonder at the many tasks
A common day demands.

I'd like to walk above the hills
And laugh, with scornful mirth,
At those whose tasks must tie them to
The paltry things of earth.
But here's a table to be cleared,
And here's a floor to sweep,
While the nursery, the children left,
Would make the angels weep.

I'd like to sit where flowers blow
Beside a babbling brook—
(But who is there to tidy up
The cluttered breakfast nook?)
I'd like to lean against a tree—
(A maple would be best)—
But Robert needs some buttons on
His growing-threadbare vest.

And Freddie needs a stocking darned,
And Shirley makes a fuss
Because the hole worn in her sleeve
Is so conspicuous!
I'd like to do a-many things,
But if I had to roam
Perhaps I'd come back, welcoming
The common tasks of Home.

A DISCOVERY

I GROW so weary of the crowd
That jostle me about
And tread upon my toes, for I'm
A victim of the gout.

My temper's none too sweet, indeed,
Not even when alone;
And I can never keep it when
My feet are trodden on.

The pain in them oft makes me feel
That someone stepped awry;
But when I look around I find
Not any passerby.

And so, I know 'tis all within
Myself, and no one near
Is to be blamed, and then I feel
So very, very queer.

And quite ashamed am I, indeed,
For surely 'tis a sin
To vent my wrath on those without
For what is wrong within!



DESTINY

WHO, walking in the Spring, shall see
New green upon the poplar tree,
And smiles with Hope as he goes by,
Is Servant of his destiny.

Who, walking in the summer fields,
Sees all the gold of harvest-yields,
And labors here unceasingly,
Is Comrade of his destiny.

But who can see the beauty fade
In noble works that God hath made,
And keep Faith bright in his soul's eye,
Is Master of his destiny.

PRAIRIE WINDS

HERE are the clean winds, the wild winds, the
west winds,
Nimble-footed, fleet winds that rush along the grass,
All the sturdy, green blades that fain would rise up
proudly,
Bow before the west winds, the young winds that pass.

Heavy-footed south winds, hot winds of noon day,
Haltingly they come along—aged, and with a sigh,
Bronzing the prairie with dull and sombre coloring,
Blighting the lilac-buds as they stumble by.

Light winds, white winds, stirring all the tree-tops,
Coming from the north-lands, touching blossoms rare,
Brushing all the twilight from before the moon's face,
Gossamer their wings are, silver-sheen their hair.

But, oh, I love the little winds that gather with the
sunrise,
Loitering and whispering, so merry in their play,
Mischievous, teasing, summer odors spilling,
That tip up all the rose cups, then laugh and run away!



WHEN WE PRAY

THERE is a place where Thought lies deep;
There is a place where Faith grows strong;
There is a place where hearts can weep
Repentance over every wrong.
There is a place where Hope beats high
Within the struggling human breast,
Where Peace may dwell, and Christ comes nigh
To meet the suppliant's earnest quest;
A place wherein the human mind
Eludes the bonds of Time and Space,
And Fellowship with all mankind
Becomes the boon of every race;
Where Heaven sheds a gladsome light
Upon each dark and toilsome way—
Rare gifts of Love and Truth and Right—
All these are ours when we pray!

ABSENT

I CAN not come to you,
Yet would I fain
Follow your lilting song
Over the plain.

I cannot come to you,
Still would I now
See Spring's fair laurels placed
Upon your brow.

I can not come to you,
Sad I, and lone;
Why do I linger here
Far from my own?

What though my eyes see not,
Are we apart
While your dear beauty dwells
Deep in my heart?



OCTOBER EVENING

METHINKS I hear the curlew call
Across the lake, while far away
There sings above the waterfall
One meadowlark at close of day.

The green is fading from the fields,
The last bird-note will soon be trilled,
Earth lies quiescent, 'neath the yields
Of harvests ripened and fulfilled.

O, bounteous plains, whose mystic skies
Brood over all the landscape fair,
Fold to your heart the melodies
That rang out through the Summer air.

And in one harmony unite
These notes of triumph ere the sun
Descends in splendor, and the night
Hides all the joys that Summer won.

IUVENA AETERNA

LOVE that wins
Is apt to be
Stranger
To tranquillity;
I, who lost,
Need never know
Save its joys
As years may go.

Never shall
I see your face
Save but filled
With kindly grace,
Strong, compassionate,
Young and fair,
Free from trace
Of worldly care.

Losing you,
I hold with me
All the best
In memory.
Ne'er can Custom
Spoil or stain;
I, who lost,
Find only gain.

No dark hand
Of Age shall mar
As I view thee
From afar,
Thus will Memory
Be true
To the days
That once we knew.

Then, when all the world
Wax cold,
Love will still be
As of old;
And when all
The songs are sung,
And you come
My dreams among,
Still I'll see you
Kind—and young!

NOVEMBER CHEER

NOVEMBER came, and still the same
Dull color clothes each vale and hill,
While all the flowers of Autumn fame
Retreat before the Winter's chill.

Bleak lies the barren waste of land,
Winds that are old and staunch and strong
Sweep through the grasses, and demand
The tributes that to them belong.

The poplar leaves in corners piled
Are tinted white with recent snow,
'Tis long since Summer suns have smiled,
Now ice prevents the river's flow.

But in one corner, overgrown
With root and fern and tumbleweed,
I see one tiny flower, sown
From summer's remnant, random seed.

O, sweet is Victory everywhere;
But this, dear flower, I gladly own
I love it most (it is so rare),
Where modesty like yours is shown!



THE GUARDIAN PINES

I SEE a city, fair among the hills,
High-crowned with golden glory on her brow,
Her beauty all the dreams of day fulfils,
But night flings over her its mantle now,
The sun recedes behind the western pines
That guard the city with a solemn vow.
"No harm can come," they say, "to thee or thine,
Though danger lurk, we never will allow
Aught to befall thee, city of our heart."
This vow they take each night, ere sun's depart.

And so within the shadows of the night
The pines stand guard above our city's homes,
Till, when Dawn breaks with her refulgent light
And crimson morn from out dull darkness comes,
The pines can see amid their golden grace
A grateful smile light up her fair, young face.

FLAME OF LIFE

LO, I have known the ways of Life,
The bitter and the sweet,
The Peace that calms all wanton strife,
And Joy that is so fleet.
And Love that goes with eager tread,
And Pain whose step is slow,
And Care—that is so quick to come,
And Youth—so quick to go.

And Sin—that fairest souls can blight,
Remorse—so hard to bear;
Forgiveness—that makes all things right—
Kindness beyond compare.
(Yet Life is but a vapor lit,
And then as quickly gone,
While birth to death is measured by
The casting of a stone!)



I WOULD GO BACK

I WOULD go back to my plains and wait for the
Spring again
And list to the ringing call of the South Saskatchewan,
Where the silent sun is coaxing the earth to one glad
refrain
And its first bright rays are telling a world is at the
dawn.

Young are my plains and fervent and calm and deep
and wise,
Land of the kingly heart and the tolerant soul and dear;
I hear in the still deep places the curlew's plaintive
cries
As if he of my soul apart were seeking respite here.

Seeking and finding, I know the life of which he dreams
Remote from the turbulent call of the crowd that moves
along,
Restless and inefficient, disturbed with paltry themes,
I would go back to my prairies, land of the One True
Song.

REVELATION

THE sun recedes, and over all
The great, vast prairie I can see,
As in a dream, new glories fall
Across the land so dear to me,
That I could wish, with natural eye,
Once more its beauties to descry.

And yet I know that not for me,
By any ecstasy of thought,
Remains this pictured harmony
That Nature for herself has wrought;
For how should I, so far away,
Try evening glories to portray?

I only know into my hand
She gave her subtle message fair,
Then breathed and tightened all the bands
That caught me fast and held me there
Till, when her face grew light, it seemed
To me as if I had not dreamed.

Alas, the hills crowd in on me,
So thick and dark and sombre-grown,
I clasp slow hands with mystery
Till in my heart one truth is known:
'Tis that Desire or vain Regret
Are one, to cherish—or forget.



RASPBERRIES

H E tended long each ragged stem
Through Springtime sun and shower;
And watched intent the growth of them
Beneath a shady bower
Till Hope returned within his breast,
And life took on an added zest

For he, from work so long denied,
Was of that saddened throng
Of aimless wanderers in the tide
Of long-lost hope and song—
A wayfarer with envious heart
'Mong men who freely plied their art.

I often wondered what his thought
As silently he came
To watch the growth that Nature wrought,
And kept him from the shame
Of asking of his country—bread,
And gave him sustenance, instead.

I watched him as he tended all
The little growing things,
Until at last one day in Fall
I saw the joy that springs
Into the eyes, at set of sun,
For those who look on work well done.

O, hard these days when Youth must sit
And turn in its distress
To face the world with eyes unlit
By any eagerness,
To give to progress, while they live,
The tribute 'tis their right to give.



INVOCATION

RETURN, return to me again;
Take not the cunning from my hand,
Inspire heart, and soul and brain,
And bid me understand.

Make every fair Today unfold,
And each Tomorrow brightly gleam,
Teach me thy haunts till I behold
The ivory gates of Dream.

Lead me along the great sea lane
And gentle prairie's winding trail;
Let landfalls mark my path again,
Nor roseate sunset fail.

My partner shall be Loveliness;
Rise up, for I take hands with her,
For never must she make me less
Her own Interpreter!

COMRADES ALL

IF I could live as I would wish,
And never turn from Truth aside,
If I could follow every step
Of One who essays to be my guide,
And never turn a wistful glance
Toward falsehood and the lesser things
I might become an angel here—
An angel here with shining wings.

But somehow, though I fain would try
To follow close the narrow trail,
I find myself oft groping hard
And merely hoping not to fail,
And stumbling oft and treading deep
Within the mire that clings and clings,
While growing dimmer to my sight
Are angels with the shining wings.

And so I wander, travel-stained
And footsore, up each grimy hill
Of failure and discouragement;
Sometimes I think I've had my fill,
But all along my way have been
(And O, what joy the knowledge brings)
Kind, faithful friends, who failing, try
And try again—what matter "wings"?



SONG OF THE HILLS

OUT in the hills a song abides
Though unaware my heart may be;
And nearer music often hides
The wondrous, voiceless melody.

The winds may chant their soft refrain,
The birds may sing their Springtime glee,
But still I long to hear again
The songs the hills would sing to me.

A song of strength whose magic chords,
Outswelling every weaker strain,
Can mend my broken thoughts and words
And make them harmonize again.

A song of Hope that lifts the hours
From out their slow and dull routine,
And bids me look on summer bowers
Though stormy landscapes intervene.

A song of Peace that bids me lift
My eyes to heights serene above,
And tells me that I cannot drift
Beyond my Heavenly Father's love.

O, Hills, in your eternal Youth,
Your lofty themes again pursue,
Give to my life the lamp of truth,
The urge to be, the will to do.

And never let your chords profound
To lesser harmonies resign,
Your heights in joy and peace abound,
Your deeps, your deeps shall call to mine!



I CANNOT SING OF MOUNTAINS

I CANNOT sing of mountains or of the gallant sea;
'Tis oh, the prairie smiling, that gets the heart o' me,
The sunlight playing gayly among the grasses shy,
And prairie roses bowing to light winds going by.

I cannot sing of mountains or of the gallant sea;
'Tis oh, the prairie frowning, that gets the heart o' me,
So angry and tempestuous—dark moods I seem to know—
(And then so soon repentant)—that makes me love
you so.

I cannot sing of mountains or of the gallant sea;
'Tis oh, the prairie waiting, that gets the heart o' me,
So calm and trustful in repose, so strong and broad and
fair,
That gives to me new courage, the will to do and
dare.

I cannot sing of mountains or of the gallant sea;
'Tis oh, the prairie brooding, that gets the heart o' me,
The stillness of the Infinite, the greatness that's divine,
And enters and possesses this restless heart of mine.

REMEMBRANCE

AND do you think I could forget
The sacred haunts of other days?
The river valley where the sun's rays set
The curlew calling through the blue-green haze,
The gopher lifting hands on velvet breast,
Alert, inquisitive, e'en while he prays,
The wood-smoke rising in the tinted west,
The meadow-lark's low, vibrant song of praise?

Remember you? O, I remember still
Against far green the faint sky-line of blue,
The file of cattle on the far-flung hill,
The silver foot-tracks in the morning dew,
The badger in his march ungainly, slow,
Along the grass or through the fields of corn,
The wild geese flying with wierd honkings low—
The young new moon—a star within its horn?

The sudden beauty of a dying day,
A muskrat stirring restless in the reeds,
The river running joyous on its way,
Beauty's low voice that he who once hears—heeds.
And we, who stood together on the range
Amid all this knowing love's steadfast cheer
That shines throughout the mists of Time and Change—
So intimate—so everlasting dear!



FRENCH-WILLOWS AT EVANGELINE'S WELL

FRENCH-WILLOWS droop against the eastern
splendor,
Grey silhouettes against the sunrise gold,
Behind gnarled trunks there lies a sea of crimson
That half reveals some glory yet untold.

Two hundred years ago, with hearts so tender,
They watched in sorrow Love's fast-falling tears,
Wind-voices only, whispering through the shadows
Some word of comfort to those far-off years.

Six only stand today of all that forest,
Drooping above the spot where now are seen
The little chapel, well and statue, telling
The lonely haunts of fair Evangeline.

Deep in my heart I've kept you, grey French-willows,
So knarled and bent, and guarding other days,
For I who stood beneath you, reverent, silent,
Seemed caught up in the mystic silver haze.

Perhaps she came that fair morn, tripping earthward,
Perhaps we caught the glimmer of her dress;
Who knows, O, Silence, but she wanders happy
With Love fulfilled amid your loveliness?



THE TOWNSFOLK WHO NEVER GROW UP

I KNOW of a town, on the edge of Nowhere,
Whose people are dwarfed as can be;
They never know conflict, or sorrow, or care,
Nor striving, and never a burden they share
To lessen the world's misery.

The days are all bright, and dusk is a dream
Where purple and rose are aglow;
Here things are only just as they seem,
And Reality sends not even a gleam
Through the sunshine of Alls-wellboro.

And no one need face the facts as they are,
And no one need think on his own,
Yet, Oh! What confusion, for no guiding star
Can send aught of radiance out from afar
Since the lesser lights are outshone.

Alas, how weak, where sunshine is rife,
Are the people who live long within
Where Darkness comes not, nor Sorrow nor Strife
Add Courage and Strength to the richness of Life
Nor Victory challenges Sin!

TRUE MEASUREMENT

THE days are short I know,
And little may be done;
But days are measured not
By rise or set of sun.

The longest day there is
May boast no kindly thought;
The longest day may see
No deed of kindness wrought.

The shortest day may be
One of rare blessedness
Marked by its loving deeds
And thoughts of tenderness.

So let me measure days
That whether they may be
Or long, or short, I may
Fulfil Thy task for me.



DECEMBER

DECEMBER is a soldier
Marching through the snow,
Stalking through the woodlands
Where the north winds blow.

He tramps through the meadows,
Broken-hearted, wise,
Knowledge of the Summer
Shining from his eyes.

Memories he carries,
Born of every clime;
Does he e'er remember
One glad Christmas-time

When the little Christ-child
Came with joy untold
To the earth, receiving
Myrrh, frankincense, gold?

Surely he remembers,
And would have us know
We may share the Christ-child
Of the long ago.

Bringing Him our offerings
As the wise did then,
While glad hosts were singing
"Peace, good-will to men."

December is a soldier,
Broken-hearted, wise,
But his heart has healing
In our sacrifice.



THE GARDEN

I THOUGHT it bare and cheerless,
Too open to the skies,
Too far from where the robins sang
Their stirring melodies.

All wistfully I wandered,
No eyes had I to see,
No ears to hear its music
Lost in dull phantasy.

But one day came Contentment,
With smile to win and bless,
And somehow all the garden
Lost its grey emptiness.

In one nook blossomed kindness,
And in another cheer,
While charity perennial
Increased from year to year.

Then friendship grew like magic
'Neath every kindly glance,
While down the path were rows on rows
Of gentle tolerance,

And watered with new gladness
That flowed its banks among
The trees, drew near with music rare,
And all my world was song!

THE COMING CHORUS

MY garden was lost in a tempest of snow,
The daffodils long have been dead,
The roses were hidden, all silent with woe,
Each garland of flowers had fled
In affright when the north wind went blustering by
And wailed through the trees with his ominous cry.

Too long have the wild winds of winter declared
They were monarchs of all the wide plain;
But I hear a new voice, though faint it has dared
To whisper of Spring-time again—
A wisp of a song in a neighboring tree
That joyously carols of Spring-time to me.

O, April will care for the slumbering sod,
And whisper the message she needs,
"There is Life, there is Hope, there is Love, there
is God."

And the still earth awakens and heeds;
And the daffodils golden, that long since were gone,
Will sing in a chorus, "Lo, Spring's at the dawn."



TWO JOURNEYS

SOON the Winter time
Will go
Walking where
The roses blow,
Silent—
As the dewes that fall
When the twilight's
Over all.
Feel the wind
Upon his face,
Seeing shadows
Weave their lace
On the moonlit,
Greening lawn,
Strange, new patterns
They have drawn.

So shall I,
One future day,
From the turmoil
Slip away
Through the window,
Half upraised,
Past the fields
Where cattle grazed
By the river's
Winding hill;
Past the tottering
Old sawmill—
Where the stars
A roadway make—
This the journey
I shall take.

Stranger flight
Then shall I wing
Than the Winter
Into Spring.



POSSESSIONS

Lo, these are really mine—
The curlew's call at dusk,
The meadow-lark's low, vibrant call at morn,
Scent of wild rose and musk.

The warm, moist earth,
The glowing sunset o'er the distant plain,
Scent of the autumn fires at close of day,
Touch of the falling rain.

Rays of a morning sun
That brighten earth anew;
Kiss of the vagrant wind upon my cheek,
Glint of the morning dew.

Lo, these are really mine,
To count as earthly gain—
Companions that can cheer a lonely way
When none I love remain!

ON TWILIGHT EVES

ON twilight eves I wait to see
The ancient moon come into view;
And every star that sings to me
Approach to keep his rendezvous.

The hills recede, and far away
The curlew sings her soft refrain;
Clear lies the surface of the bay,
And every wind is young again.

No faded flower or wilted grass,
No languid reed or drooping tree,
Where fragrant figures quickly pass—
Clad in the night's white witchery.

They give to all a subtle youth—
A freshness from the hand of God,
Till Rest comes down to quench the drouth
Of thirsting things upon the sod.

So to my heart, on twilight eves,
Thy loving gifts of calm release,
Take up the broken melodies
And light the little lamps of Peace.



MOUNTAIN LAKE

WHAT are you like, O mountain lake,
When the summer days have flown?
Who are the friends that now you make
Since I from your heart have gone?

I sailed on your breast when the sun was high,
I sailed in the eve's cool breeze
Till over the hill the night-bird's cry
Came out of the darkening trees.

And the shadows dipped o'er the friendly rim
Of the sun as she ceased to smile,
And they wandered off with a step so trim
Down the night's sequestered aisle.

Now Autumn has come by the way they went,
And ever my heart is lone
As I look around with a gaze intent
On the way that my loves have flown.
But I know they will come by a different way,
With the lilt of the leaping rill,
And warm winds call at the break of day,
And Spring, coming over the hill.



OVER THE BEYOND

THERE'S a teasing, restless, light wind roaming
Reckless about the globe,
That calls to me from morn till gloaming
To don my holiday robe;
When I shall mount I know and care not—
(Tonight is the night I'll set,
Lest some of the wind's gay pranks I share not,
Or waiting, I might forget).
So in his mood I will follow after,
Riding across the main
'Mid the moonbeam's smiles and the stars' gay laughter
And the clouds' low, sweet refrain.
Cool and gentle the winds are stirring,
Moving my barque along;
Nothing I ask, and never demurring,
I follow where he has gone.
Over the clouds through mist-made garlands,
Looking down on the sea;
Where Day shifts to Twilight, and all the Starlands
Call to me merrily;
Further than Laughter or Care or Dreaming,
Following where he wills,
Till shadows creep through the moon's soft beaming,
And Silence reigns on the hills.
O Wind, so fair and so beguiling,
Stealing my Thought away,
Calling to me and so subtly smiling
Me into a holiday.
The morn has come and its suppliant sighing
Forbids me more to roam,
There's a work-a-day world that brooks no flying
Away from the realm of Home.

SUNSET

WITH folding wings of lustrous light,
Behind the purple hills he fares
His homeward way into the night,
And passes outward unawares.

A crimson glow, a softer hue,
Until his wings are closely furled;
Then silently he bids adieu
To all the weary-ridden world.

So calm, so radiant, he has given
In his departing flight, I ween,
A glimpse of some bright, nearer heaven,
With silvery seas that lie between.

And something of this Calm is mine,
And something of the Peace that brings
A hint of harmonies divine
As shadows hide his folded wings.



REMINISCENCE

I HAVE a longing once again
To see fair lands I used to know.
What if I call for them in vain
Since in my heart I loved them so?

I need not seek with human eye
To find the beauty that was mine;
For nearer yet their shadows lie,
And closer are their lights divine.

And all their rhythm in me dwells,
And all their miracle of song,
And every rapture that dispels
Dark moods to which the soul belong.

Of all I met I am a part,
From glowing dawn to set of sun,
Because I cherish in my heart
One heart that beats in unison.

TRANSITION

OUT of the Old Year's ashes and decay
The New Year comes with sunny, joyous smile,
To find us seeking former joys the while,
And flaunting them, with gestures of dismay.

Bid us be calm. The New Year's comely face
So vivid, warm-hued and a little sad,
Beseeches us to make her advent glad,
And grant her welcome with more kindly grace.

Lo, as we see her drawing closer now,
Marred by no shadow of Life's darker things,
Round her an halo of kind impulse clings—
The lips sweet tenderness, the thoughtful brow.

And as we greet her, clothed in morning dew,
(Regretful and a little clamorous),
So suddenly she turns and smiles on us,
That we forget the Old Year in the New!



THE TRYSTING-PLACE

I 'VE often thought that God must walk
Across the prairies of a night,
So filled with wondrous sounds are they—
So strangely gilt with heavenly light.

Nowhere are worlds so silent now
As out across this peaceful sea,
Nowhere is human life so apt
To catch the glimpse of Deity.

But since, alas, our ears are dull,
His fair approach remains unheard,
And in our haste we fail to know
The gentle footfall of our Lord.

O, give to us the listening ear,
Lest Haste and Pleasure of the night
Shall dull our sense of Calm, till we
Lose converse with the Infinite.

SPRING IS IN THE AIR

SPRING is in the air today,
Skies are blue as they can be,
River-voices far away
Send their melody to me,
And a hand has touched the sod—
'Tis, I know, the hand of God.

Lo, He gives new life again
To the world that round us lies;
Sends the sunshine and the rain,
Making earth a paradise,
Lest those thoughtless, without care,
Pass her magic unaware.

Touch our lives today, our Lord,
With this self-same, magic power,
And where'er Thy voice is heard
May new impulse be our dower
Till our hearts are, by Thy hand,
Gardens in a barren land.



WASTED MOMENTS

I LIKE not wasted moments, for
No one can ever know
How quickly wasted minutes fly
And into hours grow.

And all the wasted hours, they
To days and weeks I'm told
Will lengthen out (and time, they say,
More precious is than gold!)
And wasted weeks to months and years,
Where idleness is rife,
Will all too soon, as years go by,
Make up a wasted life.

Then care for all the moments, nor
Lose one along the way—
No power brings back the ill-spent time
Of any Yesterday.

AFTERWARD

WITH gentle step I came at last
To where we sat long years ago;
I touched his fingers as I passed,
And called his name—so soft and low.

I moved the leaves above his head,
And smoothed his ruffled, dark-brown hair;
I wondered why he thought me dead,
And why the look of dull despair.

I wished that I might tell him how
I lived a fuller life than he;
I placed cool hands upon his brow;
Then when I thought he looked at me—

He only moved the lips I'd heard
And said it was the wind that stirred.



I SEEK MY WAY

I SEEK my way adown the world;
O, far and eager is my quest;
O'er mountain high and lowly vale
And farther outward to the west,
Where ocean's blue and sunset's gold
Their loveliness to me unfold.

Yet still my heart is more at home
Along the prairie's winding trail
Where winds play through the grasses gray,
And suns o'er wide horizons sail,
And moons have made the night as day
Across the lands of Far-away.

Where brotherhood that claims us all
Can teach us lessons glad and free—
That earth is only but a part
Of all that Heaven is to be—
Where God had ne'er revealed so clear
His gift of Immortality.

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To a prairie rose
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